



MEETING MINUTES / 20 NOVEMBER 2018

ATTENDANCE:

Present: Showell, Stewart, Armbruster (call-in), Baldwin, Bradley, Johnson, Lardizzone, Lopez, McMullen, Sarg, Seppala **73.3%**

Excused: Farley, Magner, Newman

Unexcused: Newstadt

Guests: Vince Kane (Wilmington VAMC) (call-in), Bill Peterson (Delaware Veterans Home), Pat Cerchio (First State Women Warriors), Kim McMullen, Art Titus (Paralyzed Veterans of America – Colonial Chapter)

CHAIRWOMAN'S OPENING REMARKS:

Requested prayers for Commissioners Farley, Armbruster, and Sarg who have experiences health concerns

Acknowledged several veteran related events during November which kept members busy

Attended Sussex Veterans Court and was humbled and moved by the veterans participating

- Bill Gay oversees the program and Laurie Corsa participates
- Impressed by engagement of mentors and mentees
- Discussed the successes and failures of various cases
- Mentors are needed for the program

MEETING MINUTES:

Approved, motions: Lardizzone and Sarg

ADMINISTRATIVE REMARKS:

Wilmington VAMC – Vince Kane, Director (telephone)

Wished members “Happy Holidays”

Communicated how the center is also involved in Veterans Treatment Court and added additional resources to Justice Outreach Program to ensure this population is connected to resources

- Needs partnership with justice, VA, and community to succeed

Identified center's priorities

- Re-establishing palliative and hospice care to provide a dignified end of life
 - - Help veterans with chronic, debilitating conditions in a timely way
 - - Work to have family present
 - - Activating separate hospice beds on unit
 - - Increase home based primary care
- Seeking to increase specialty care availability, to include more virtual care, at center and community clinics
 - - Increase continuity between primary and specialty care in addition to increasing staff
- Maintain care in community programs
 - - Goal is to increase veteran access to care and care satisfaction
 - - Add nurse navigators to ensure clinical care

Delegate authority from Washington, DC (VA) approved Dover clinic expansion

- Working with contract team to work solicitation

- Early 2019 will meet with community of developers and stakeholders on how to submit an application toward Request for Proposal
- Projected 27K square feet to promote more veteran services outside of Wilmington

One of few East Coast centers that had enrollment growth

Outreach programs are making a difference in reaching veterans

- Selected an outreach person for Sussex County

Georgetown clinic cares for 3400 veterans

Plan to award garage contract in January with ground breaking in the spring

- Project will add 200 additional parking spaces about a year following the ground breaking
- Parking will be a challenge during construction
- Employees will be bussed to campus to help with veteran parking
- Will push virtual care to reduce visits

(Lopez) Are you familiar with an upcoming Transition and Care Management (TCM) workshop in January for Other than Honorable discharge upgrades, do you have details?

- Veteran Health Administration (VHA) is looking at this nationally, had a workshop in Butler, PA, and is scripted from a national perspective
- We requested to have a workshop in Wilmington and South Jersey but are seeking local legal persons to provide information
 - - A date has not been established
 - - The goal is for the workshop information to be enduring

(Armbruster) Thanked the VA emergency team for helping with a personal health issue

(Bradley) Do you provide shingle immunizations?

Yes, let your primary care provider know you're interested in receiving it

(Sarg) Concerning civilian treatment (non-VA provider) of veterans, if they had a negative encounter, is it true that they cannot sue that provider?

Not aware of that thought, will have to look into it

Working with Philadelphia center to re-establish surgical care

- Key position is having a vascular surgeon
 - - Recruiting for the position for complicated surgeries
 - - We work with legislators and community health to stress importance of having this position
 - - Needed for Delaware, South Jersey, and Pennsylvania
 - - Will submit the request package through Washington, DC
 - - Having the surgeon will allow veterans to have procedures close to home

(Seppala) Mark Taylor encouraged me to seek VA coverage and after I submitted my request and didn't hear anything, he researched and verified my coverage

Proud that outstanding medical provider applicants are applying to work at Wilmington

Delaware Veterans Home (DVH) – Bill Peterson, Director:

Received Notice of Award, from VA, to renovate the dining room

- De-construction has begun
- Due to work, there will not be a Christmas party
- Milford building commission needs to review exterior construction paperwork
- Expanding dining room by 2500 square feet
 - - There will be four individualized sections: sports bar theme, coastal theme, upscale theme, and Colorado chateau
- Outdoor patio will have a complete kitchen with a grill
- Costs \$3.4M with August/September 2019 completion

Upgrading camera from analog to digital

Closed blue unit to add their bathing suite

- Projected March 2019 completion

Undersized generator, 400 kilowatts capability, actually need 1250 kilowatts capability

- Discovered during summer power outage and air conditioning would not work for over 30 hours
 - - Came close to evacuating residents
- Replacement is covered through VA, will obtain safety grant to cover cost of \$1.3M
- 70 residents, six admissions approved last month
- End of year goal is 90 but may have to be readjusted
- 19 December / Job Fair hoping to gain Delaware Tech graduates and schools that have a mid-term graduation
- Has discussed with Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) programs
- In October applied for nurse recruitment and retention grant, through the VA where it's a 50-50 match
- Grant was awarded
- Totaled \$7900.00
- Can offer nurses \$3900.00 signing bonus, paid out in four quarters during first year
 - - Involves two year commitment to remain on staff
- If employees recommend a nurse or CNA they can receive a graduated referral amount
- (Sarg) What's the status of the bus?
- Older bus needs to be replaced, can only use for local trips, \$52K replace estimate
- Will seek RFP to replace
- Difficult to retain nursing staff due to outside competitors (Bay Health, etc.)
- Approximately 37 vacancies (nurses – 8)
- Home's staffing may be impacted by staff shortages (this is true throughout the nation)
- Has enough staff to care for 125 residents
- May seek VA grant to train own CNAs, then potentially nurses
 - - Program will fund education

Home of the Brave, Director Jessica Finan:

Not present

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Joe Ushinski, Natural Harbor Farm

Discussed program wishing to house and train 18 veterans on their Townsend farm site

- Will teach farming, culinary arts, hotel management, and construction training through 6 – 12 months training
- Veterans will also be able to live on site
- After receiving training, the goal is for veterans to remain and mentor/train other veterans
- Facilities are available for disabled veterans
- Seeking referrals and support

Slides are available for full information

Art Titus, Paralyzed Veterans of America – Colonial Chapter

Located in Newark but also serves Pennsylvania, Maryland, New Jersey

Recent National Veterans Wheelchair Games, Orlando, FL featured three chapter veterans

Does skeet shooting and fishing tournaments

Members must have spinal cord injury or multiple sclerosis

Helps with lifts, chairs, or ramps for eligible veterans

- Applicants complete application form and show W-2

- Lifts and ramps are professionally installed

- Ramps for vehicles

Sponsored Rehoboth 5K walk for donations

Has a veteran service officer at Wilmington Benefits Office

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Bear Veterans Memorial Cemetery, Commissioner Armbruster:

Interments – 61

Barbara Cooke, Cemetery Administrator on indefinite medical leave

Millsboro Veterans Memorial Cemetery, Commissioner Bradley:

Interments – 33

Wreaths will be placed the week of 10 December

Health and Human Services, Commissioner Sarg:

Brain Injury Council

- Has a trust fund

- - Can use for veteran service dog applications if related to brain injuries

- - Contains \$50K

- - Through the end of the fiscal year, 30 June

Legislative Affairs, Commissioner McMullen:

Sarg is compiling legislative recommendations

Seeking submissions from commissioners and service organizations for legislative recommendations

Original deadline was today but will accept until next meeting, 18 December

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS:

DVTF Previous Month: Applications 13; Granted 10 (76.9%); Awarded \$9,985.14; Balance - \$70,686.00

Balance applies to state balance and not the Friends of Delaware Veterans balance

Will seek specific state representative or senator sponsorship for legislative recommendations

New Hire, New Castle Veterans Service Officer, Lisa Smith starts Monday, 25 November

ORGANIZATIONAL REPORTS:

Commissioner McMullen (Air Force Sergeants Association - AFSA)

15 November meeting was cancelled

- Elections will be held at the December meeting

- Recruited several members via Retiree Day event

- Chapter is sponsoring a sox collecting drive for the homeless

- MSgt Steven Kent and A1C Thomas Clark represented AFSA at the bridge ceremony

20 Oct: Attended the Retiree Appreciation Day, Dover AFB

3 Nov: Attend Delaware Women's Memorial Dedication

3 Nov: Attended Trust Fund Dinner

11 Nov: Attended Bridge Ceremony and Gold Star Families Memorial Monument Dedication

12 Nov: Attended Veterans Day Ceremony at American Legion Walter L. Fox Post 2, Dover, DE

13 Nov: Attended DCVA Executive Council Meeting.

19 Nov: Attended State of the Base Briefing at Dover AFB

Commissioner Armbruster (American Legion - AL)

Nothing to report

Commissioner Bradley (American Veterans - AmVets)

3 Nov: AmVets officers and spouses attended Trust Fund Dinner

- Post 2 sponsored \$1,000.00 table.

11 Nov: Post 2 hosted a Veterans Day ceremony and luncheon

12 Nov: Attended Senator Pettyjohn's Veterans Town Hall meeting at Del Tech

16 Nov: Ladies Auxiliary hosted a mystery dinner theater night, proceeds support veterans' funds

7 – 8 Dec: Scheduled to attend NEC meeting in Linthicum, MD as a state representative

Commissioner Lardizzone (Disabled American Veterans - DAV)

18 Oct: Attended the DAV Seminar at Camden headquarter (given by the NSO supervisor)

18 -19 Oct: Attended Departmental Service Officer recertification course

23 Oct: Attended Operational Excellence Award Presentation at the Bear Cemetery

24 Oct: Attended the Wreaths Across America planning meeting

24 Oct: Attended Womens Monument meeting

26 Oct: Attended the Veterans Home Admissions meeting

30 Oct: Attended Friends of the Veterans Home meeting

11 Nov: Attended Bridge Ceremony

13 Nov: Attended Wilmington VAMC's service officers' meeting

13 Nov: Attended Commission Executive Committee meeting

15 Nov: Attended the Delaware National Guard Prayer Breakfast

Commissioner Johnson (Korean War Veterans Association - KWVA)

Nothing to report

31 Oct: Attended "Tell America" student program at Dagsboro Church God

8 Nov: Attended Chapter meeting and held elections for the next 2 years

9 Nov: Attended Veterans Day celebration at CHEER center (Georgetown)

11 Nov: Attended Bridge Ceremony and Gold Star Families Memorial Dedication

12 Nov: Attended Veterans Town Hall at Del Tech

13 Nov: Attended Veterans Day celebration at CHEER center (Milton)

16 Nov: Attended Veterans Day celebration at Cape Henlopen High School

17 Nov: Attended celebration of SSGT Artishia Stephens as she was vetted as an original Tuskegee Airman

Wounded Warrior Fund's Donations:

- Veterans Stand Down - \$10,000

- CHEERS Center (Georgetown) - \$10,000

- - Towards new kitchen and also to help we will feed 300 veterans for a week

- Wreaths Across America - \$5000

Warrior Family Centers which we also donate to are used by 250,000 service members

Commissioner Farley (Marine Corps League - MCL)

Three MCL detachments were Bronze sponsors for the Trust Fund Dinner

Toys for Tots drive is on, for toy pick up or other information contact Dennis Sipple at 302-0583 or d.sipple100@comcast.net

Commissioner Sarg (Military Officers Association of America - MOAA)

23 Oct: Attended Friends of Delaware Veterans meeting

26 Oct: Attended Delaware Veterans Home Admissions meeting

30 Oct: Attended Friends of the Delaware Veterans Home meeting

3 Nov: Attended Delaware Veterans Trust Fund Dinner

5 Nov: Attended Brain Injury Council meeting

10 Nov: Attended Dover Veterans Day Ceremony
11 Nov: Attended Bridge Ceremony
13 Nov: Attended Employment First Oversight Commission meeting
13 Nov: Attended DCVA Executive Meeting

Commissioner Magner (Military Order of the Purple Heart - MOPH)

10 Nov: Organization members attended Veterans Day and Gold Star Families Memorial dedication ceremonies at Veterans Memorial Park

12 Nov: Attended breakfast and panel discussion at Del Tech Stanton Campus

- Facilitated by Major General (Retired) Francis Vavala

- Recognized Delaware Guard members

- Highlighted veteran educational opportunities offered by Del Tech

Chapter 9377 donated \$500.00 to the Wilmington VA Holiday Giving Program

- Program supports needy veterans and their families

Commissioner Newman (Veterans of Foreign Wars - VFW)

18 – 22 Oct: Attended VFW National Training (Department Adjutant and Jr Vice Commander), Kansas City, MO

1 – 3 Nov: Served as Chairman, 84th Supreme Military Order of the Cootie Tomb Trek, Arlington National Cemetery

11 Nov: Attended VFW Post 3238 Veterans Day Observance

12 Nov: Attended Department of Delaware Council of Administration

16 – 18 Nov: Attended the VFW Eastern Conference, Framingham, MA

28 Oct and 11 Nov: Participated in Code Purple fund raising events

Participated in Department VFW Fund Raiser for Veterans and Family Support

NOTE: The Department arranged and transported in a Semi over \$9000 of needed water and food to North Carolina in relief from Hurricane Florence.

Commissioner Baldwin (Vietnam Veterans of America – VVA)

Held a workshop for University of Delaware, Wilmington University, Goldey Beacom, and Wesley Student Veteran Clubs on Washington Foundation internships

Meeting with Lewes Rotary on possible establishment of endowment for Veterans Trust Fund

Attended Wilmington VAMC veteran service officer meeting

Scheduled meeting with Department of Labor Secretary on employment for veterans initiative, myself and General Vavala

7 Dec / 1200: Unveiling of Pearl Harbor Memorial at Lake Como, Smyrna

- Sponsored by VVA

- My son, grandson, and I will be in uniform and participate in the ceremony

24 Dec / 1900: Caroling at the Wilmington VV Memorial in Wilmington, 1900

Commissioner Showell (At Large, affiliated with Delaware National Guard)

Colonel Karen Berry will be promoted to Brig. Gen

287th Army Band Concerts will take place in at the Grand Opera House (Wilmington) and the Rollins Center (Dover)

- Dates will be announced

Commissioner Newstadt (At Large, affiliated with Jewish War Veterans)

Nothing to report

Commissioner Seppala (At Large, affiliated with Military Order of World Wars)

21 Oct: Attended celebration of French Royal Deux Ponts Regiment

- Fought with the Americans in the Revolutionary War

- Held at the Pencader Heritage Museum (Cooch's Bridge) with a lecture and luncheon at the Delaware Saengerbund German Club

23 Oct: Attended Operational Excellence Award at Bear Veterans Cemetery

9 Nov: Attended "Welcome Home" ceremony for 1-126 Medical Company (Air Ambulance), Delaware Army National Guard

11 Nov: Attended Veterans Day and Gold Star Families Memorial monument at Veterans Memorial Park

13 Nov: Co-organized and emceed "Salute To Veterans" reception, dinner and program honoring approximately 100 Cokesbury Village Retirement Community veterans

15 Nov: Attended the Delaware National Guard Prayer Breakfast

17 Nov: Worked as a docent (guide) at the Delaware Military Museum

Commissioner Lopez (At Large, affiliated with Delaware Veterans)

18 Oct: Presented Veterans Parade and Women's Military Monument information at Capital City Rotary Club meeting

19 Oct: Served on the Commission By-Laws review committee

20 Oct: Participated in the Monster Mile Walk for Breast Cancer with DelVets Post 2 team

- Received trophy for largest team

24 Oct: Attended Women's Military Monument Committee meeting

24 Oct: Co-Chaired the Veteran's Day Parade Committee meeting

27 Oct: Represented DelVets and DCVA at the Sons of the American Revolutionary War Grave Placement Ceremonies, Barratt's Chapel

1 Nov: Attended the final coordination meeting for the Veteran's Day Parade.

3 Nov: Assisted with and walked with Female Service Women of all Eras in the Veterans Day Parade

3 Nov: Served as keynote speaker for the Women's Military Monument Dedication Ceremony

3 Nov: Attended and assisted with Silent Auction at the Delaware Trust Fund Dinner

6 Nov: Visited Wilmington VAMC Transition and Care Management (TCM) Case Managers

- Learned of upcoming Other Than Honorable (OTH) lawyer's workshop in Jan 2019

- OTH recipients will be able to discuss their cases and receive assistance

7 Nov: Conducted DelVets Post 2 Executive and General Membership meetings

- Focused on benevolent dinner/fundraisers and families in need for sponsorship during Thanksgiving and Christmas Holidays

8 Nov: Spoke with children grades K-8 about Military Service experiences during Veterans Honor Day at the Campus Community School

10 Nov: Attended DelVets Veterans Day Breakfast

11 Nov: Attended Bridge Ceremony and Gold Star Memorial Monument Dedication Ceremony at War Memorial Plaza

Commissioner Stewart (At Large, affiliated with student veterans associations)

4 Dec / 1030: Student Veterans Task Force Meeting

- Seeking ways to help student veterans transfer school and military training credits to Delaware universities

TERM COMPLETION:

EVENTS:

7 Dec / 1200: Pearl Harbor Monument Dedication, Lake Como, Smyrna

10 Dec / 1000: DNG's American Illustration Collection Display, Public Archives

10 Dec / 1130: Wreaths Across America, Legislative Hall
18 Dec / 1230: DCVA Holiday Party, DelVets Post 2, Dover
17 Jan / 0830: Delaware Joining Forces, Adams State Service Center, Georgetown
23 Jan / 1100: DCVA Table Display, Legislative Hall

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

By Laws Review Committee Information (OPEN)

- Commissioner Stewart passed out proposed changes and asked the commissioners to review Legislative Proposal Process (OPEN)
- Discussed the need to have a legislative sponsor to support and introduce individual DCVA legislative recommendations
- A sponsor can provide answers if a recommendation does not move forward, versus just giving the recommendations to the General Assembly's Veterans Affairs Committee

NEW BUSINESS:

ITEMS FOR THE GOOD AND WELFARE OF THE ORGANIZATION:

Commissioner Lardizzone asked guests to bring a toy to the DAV Christmas Party
There is a \$10.00 charge for DCVA Christmas Party attendees who are not employees or commissioners

SPECIAL SESSION:

NEXT MEETING:

Tuesday, 18 December 2018 at 10:00 AM

LOCATION:

Delaware Commission of Veterans Affairs